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4 LEGAL ASPECTS AND TESTIMONY

4.1 Introduction to Legal Aspects

4.1.1 Objectives

Through completion of this module the trainee will develop the theoretical knowledge to be conversant in:

- The Federal Rules of Evidence as related to expert testimony;
- The Code of Virginia as related to admissibility of Certificates of Analysis;
- The admissibility of scientific tests to include the difference between "Frye" and "Daubert";
- Types of subpoenas;
- Types of evidence, to include: direct evidence, circumstantial evidence, physical evidence, and scientific evidence;
- The difference between individual characteristics and class characteristics and types of evidence displaying each; and,
- Courtroom procedures, to include:
 - o Oath.
 - o Sequestering of witnesses,
 - o Exparte communications of witnesses,
 - Examination:
 - Direct examination,
 - Cross examination,
 - Qualifying questions,
 - Court acceptance as a qualified examiner,
 - Use of reference materials.
 - Use of literary articles.
 - Use of visual aids,
 - Use of opposing expert witnesses,
 - o Recognition and Identification of Evidence,
 - Chain of custody,
 - o Certificate of Analysis,
 - o Explanations of examinations,
 - Conclusions

4.1.2 Required Readings

- 4.2.1 <u>The Code of Virginia</u>, Michie Press (most recently annotated version available); also, http://leg1.state.va.us/000/src.htm.
 - § 9.1-117. Division of Forensic Science; duties.
 - § 9.1-121. Rights of accused person or his attorney to results of investigation or to investigation.
 - § 9.1-122. Reexamination by independent experts
 - § 19.2-187. Admission into evidence of certain certificates of analysis.
 - § 19.2-187.01. Certificate of analysis as evidence of chain of custody of material described therein.
 - § 19.2-187.2. Procedure for subpoena duces tecum of analysis evidence.
 - § 19.2-187.1. Right to examine person performing analysis or involved in chain of custody.
 - § 54.1-3431. Admission into evidence of certain certificates of analysis.
- 4.2.2 Federal Rules of Evidence on expert testimony, Article VII.

4.1.3 Questions

The trainee will provide written answers to the following questions:

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- Define the following terms:
 - o Direct evidence
 - o Circumstantial evidence
 - Physical evidence
 - Scientific evidence
 - Individual characteristics
 - Class characteristics
 - o Subpoena duces tecum
- Describe the difference between testimony by a lay witness and testimony by an expert witness.
- Describe the difference between an objection that has been overruled and one that has been sustained.

4.1.4 Practical Exercises

- 4.1.4.1 The trainer and the trainee will discuss the topics listed in the objectives as they relate to legal aspects.
- 4.1.4.2 The trainee will search the Legislative Information System at a minimum using "forensic science" on the search line.

4.1.5 Evaluation

- 4.1.5.1 The trainer will review the written answers to the questions with the trainee.
- 4.1.5.2 The trainer and the trainee will review and discuss the pertinent points of each of the required readings.
- 4.1.5.3 Review of practical exercises.

4.2 Introduction to Testimony Skills

4.2.1 Objectives

Through completion of this module the trainee will have developed and demonstrated theoretical knowledge and/or practical skills to:

- Present appropriate courtroom demeanor as it relates to direct eye contact with the trier of fact;
- Present appropriate courtroom demeanor as it relates to protocol in addressing the trier of fact;
- Dress professionally;
- Maintain composure on the witness stand;
- Be aware of verbal inflections and body language;
- Respond to questions in a clear, concise and accurate manner;
- Answer technical questions in layman's terms;
- Maintain unquestionable ethical standards and conduct;
- Prepare for court with good note taking and documentation skills;
- Prepare for court with good communication skills; and
- Understand the purpose and protocol of pretrial conferences.

4.2.2 Required Readings

- 4.2.2.1 Burke, J. L., "Testifying in Court," *The Legal Digest*, September 1975, pp. 8 13.
- 4.2.2.2 Hodge, E. and Blackburn, B. "Courtroom Demeanor," AFTE Journal, pp. 7–14.

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- 4.2.2.3 Kogan, J.D., "On Being a Good Expert Witness in a Criminal Case", *Journal of Forensic Science*, Vol. 23, No. 1, January 1978, pp. 190-200.
- 4.2.2.4 Kuzmack, Nicholas T., "Legal Aspects of Forensic Science," <u>Forensic Science Handbook</u>, Saferstein, Richard, ed., Prentice-Hall, New York, NY, 1982, pp. 1-27.
- 4.2.2.5 Moenssens, A. A., Moses, R. E., Inbau, F. E., <u>Scientific Evidence in Criminal Cases</u>, The Foundation Press, Inc., Mineola, 1973, pp. 1-58 and 267-280.
- 4.2.2.6 National District Attorneys Association, <u>Trial Technique: Predicate Questions</u>, 2nd ed, N.A.D.A., Alexandria, VA, 1998, pp. 32-38.
- 4.2.2.7 Tanton, R. L., "Jury Preconceptions and Their Effect on Expert Scientific Testimony," *Journal of Forensic Science*, 1979, Vol. 24, p. 681-691.

4.2.3 Questions

The trainee will provide written answers to the following questions:

- Define voir dire.
- State your name.
- Where are you employed?
- What position do you hold?
- How long have you been employed by the Division of Forensic Science?
- What are your duties?
- What is your educational background?
- Do you have any specialized training in forensic science?
- Have you ever testified as an expert in Virginia courts?

4.2.4 Practical Exercises

- 4.2.4.1 The trainer and the trainee will discuss the topics listed in the objectives as they relate to testimony.
- 4.2.4.2 The trainee will complete an electronic version of the ASCLD-LAB Statement of Qualifications form.
- 4.2.4.3 The trainee will prepare the answers to the section 4.2.3 questions in a format suitable for distribution to attorneys as qualifying questions.
- 4.2.4.4 The trainee will complete mini-mock trial questioning involving qualifying information.

4.2.5 Evaluation

- 4.2.5.1 The trainer will review the written answers to the questions with the trainee.
- 4.2.5.2 The trainer and the trainee will review and discuss the pertinent points of each of the required readings.
- 4.2.5.3 Review of practical exercises.

4.3 Reading List

- 4.3.1 Burke, J. L., "Testifying in Court," *The Legal Digest*, September 1975.
- 4.3.2 Code of Virginia, Michie Press.

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4.3.2	Federal Rules of Evidence, Article VII.	
2.0.0	Hodge, E. and Blackburn, B. "Courtroom Demeanor," AFTE Journal.	
3.0.0	Kogan, J.D., "On Being a Good Expert Witness in a Criminal Case", <i>Journal of Forensic Science</i> , Vol. 23, No 1, January 1978.	
4.3.3	Moenssens, A. A., Moses, R. E., Inbau, F. E., <u>Scientific Evidence in Criminal Cases</u> , The Foundation Press, Inc. Mineola, 1973.	
4.3.4	National District Attorneys Association, <u>Trial Technique: Predicate Questions</u> , 2 nd ed., N.D.A.A., Alexandria, VA, 1998.	
	C.C. at in Distant at English Colony, Heathert Description	

4.3.5 Saferstein, Richard, ed., Forensic Science Handbook,., Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, NY, 1982.

7.0.0 Tanton, R. L., "Jury Preconceptions and Their Effect on Expert Scientific Testimony," *Journal of Forensic Science*, 1979, Vol. 24, pp. 681-691.

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